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132 A luxuriant growth of perennials in the autumn is a sure
137 sign that the particular district has been visited by good *ṣejfi* rains, whence the saying: "O that lovely little gazelle! it will eat its fill of the autumn pasture after the summer rain; *jâ 'ajn al-ḥšejf tar'-al-ḥelfi 'oḳb aṣ-ṣejfi.*" Abundant summer
[312] rain also fills both the natural and artificial reservoirs, but such water soon swarms with frogs, *daṛâliṣ*, and all kinds of worms, which render it foul-smelling and undrinkable in a short time.

PRAYERS FOR RAIN

539* If the earth does not receive abundant autumnal rain, the danger of a failure of the pasture, *maḥal* (or *muḥṭi*),
789 arises. In order to prevent it, the girls and wives of the Bedouins form a procession with the *umm al-ṛejṭ*, mother of the rain (Fig. 1). A woman's gown is stretched over two sticks forming a cross and is carried by a girl (virgin) at the head of the procession, which wanders from tent to tent singing:

1. *Jâ-mm al-ṛejṭ ṛejṭîna*
   belli bšejt râ'ina
2. *jâ-mm al-ṛejṭ ṛejṭîna*
   min al-maṭar eẓîna
3. *jâ-mm al-ṛejṭ ṛejṭîna*
   min midd allâh meddîna
4. *jâ-mm al-ṛejṭ ṛejṭîna*
   min al-wabel enṭîna.

O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
Wet the mantle of our herdsman.
O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
With pouring rain allay our thirst.
O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
From Allâh's measure measure out to us.
O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
A real flood let our share be.

Verse 1. *Ṛejṭ* signifies a rain of at least four days' duration
[291] extending over a vast region. *Bšejt* is a cheap gray cloak made of wool or cotton waste. 2. The girls gradually increase their prayers for rain. At first they want the rain only to wet the herdsman's mantle; then they pray for a downpour, *maṭar*,

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which lasts several hours. 3. If Allâh pours from his measure, or rain vessel, that is a cloud-burst. 4. *Wabel* is a downpour for several days, inundating whole plains. *Nafa'* is used for *'afa'*, to give.

1. *Jâ-mm al-rejt rejtina*
   dâjem ḥarreč bâlina
2. *jâ-mm al-rejt rejtina*
   dâjem 'aǧǧen 'âmina
3. *jâ-mm al-rejt rejtina*
   waḫj al-maḥal jatlina
4. *jâ-mm al-rejt jâ ṭak'a*
   ḳatalna-l-bard w-ṣak'a.

O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
Thy evil is still tormenting us.
O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
Clouds of dust are still blinding us.
O mother of the rain! rain upon us;
The specter of want speeds towards us.
O mother of the rain! O hungry one!
The chill and severe cold have destroyed us.

Verse 4. *Bard* is less strong than *ṣak'a*. In summer the saying "*bard al-jowm*, it is chilly today," is often heard, but *ṣak'a* is used only when the icy but dry north wind penetrates the bones.

1. *Alli ta'ṭina bel-rerbâl*
   ǧa'al wulejdah ḫajjâl
2. *alli ta'ṭina bel-menḫel*
   ǧa'al wulejdah jedḫel
3. *alli ta'ṭina bel-ḥafna*
   'asa 'aduwwateh ledafnah
4. *alli ta'ṭina bel-kamâa*
   ǧa'al 'ajûnaha-r-ramâa.

Of her who will give us a full sieve,
Oh may (Allâh) make the little son grow up a rider.
Of her who will give us a full bolt,
Oh may (Allâh) lead the ewe to a bride.
Of her who will give us a large handful,
Oh may the grave open for her enemy.
Of her who will give us a small handful,
Oh may her eyelashes soon grow thicker.

Verse 3. *Ḥafna* is as much as the hand with the palm turned upwards and with bent fingers can hold, or a large handful. 4. *Kamāṣ* is as much as can be held between the palm and the fingers of the hand turned downwards, or a small handful.

Erčebûni-l-ḥâši
w-eb'adâ bûkmâši
dem' 'ajni nawwâši
'ala-lli ǧarraḥûni.

Seat me upon a weak young camel,
And take away him who would hold me;
The tears of my eyes are exhausted
Weeping for him from whom they have parted me.

Ḥâši is a camel not yet three years old; an older she-camel is called *ǧill*. The young camel suffers from lack of pasture and water, the girl from sorrow for her lost sweetheart, and both will perish if no one cares for them.

Erčebûni-l-ḥamra'	Seat me upon a bay mare,
w-eṭ'emûni tamra	Feed me with one date.
allâh jeṭâl 'omrak	Oh may Allâh prolong his life,
jowm hom ḫallaṣûni.	For they have liberated me.

They (her relatives) saved her from death by bringing back her lover, who did not perish of thirst in the raid.

Já ǧîb já ṭâred al-ḥejf
oṭrod ḥabûb aš-šemâli
'ajjaxt 'alja' w-abu zejd
ahl al-ḳṣûr al-'awâli.

O wolf! O thou who strugglest with the hot south wind!
Drive away the cold breeze of the north wind.
Thou hast surely seen 'Alja and Abu Zejd,
Who used to dwell in manors high.

The wolf is not injured by the various winds and thus reaches an age so great that he could tell much concerning the occupants of the demolished manors which he has seen. *Al-ḥejf* is the hot dry wind blowing in summer from the south-east, causing much suffering, especially to children and women. *Aš-šemâli* is the icy north wind, which destroys plants as well as animals and human beings. If it blows for some time, the grass freezes and both animals and men fall sick. There are

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no rains after the *ḥejf* in summer nor after the *ḍemâli* in winter. The wolf struggles, *ṭâred*, with the south wind and overcomes and drives away the north wind. Abu Zejd and his sweetheart 'Alja are the heroes of stories that are told among

FIG. 1—*Umm al-ṛejṭ*, mother of rain.

the settlers. They are supposed to have owned the towns now lying in ruins and to have lived in manors, the crumbling walls of which rise high above the horizon on the borders of the desert.

In every tent a gift of some kind is handed to the girls accompanying the *umm al-ṛejṭ*. Having visited all the tents in the camp, they go with their *umm al-ṛejṭ* to a small tent pitched at some distance, where they divide and eat whatever has been given them, remove the gown from the cross, and in the evening return to their tents.

PERIODS OF ABUNDANCE AND WANT

An abundant *wasm* rain, especially the rain of *aṯ-ṯurêwi* (of the Pleiades) assures to the Bedouins, as we have already said, a rich pasture of annual plants or grasses, *'eśeb*, and thus abundance, commonly called *rubê'*. In the inner desert

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539x

1. *Jâ dâr jâ dâr arjaš al-'ajn wuddi*
   'oḳob al-maḥal jâ dâr ḫolli merîfe
2. *ana-nšedeč 'an ṣâḥebi wên meddi*
   ṣâjefeč ana limhazhaz aṣ-ṣedeż żîfe
3. *ḳâlat 'aširak medd ṣowbi w-ǧeddi*
   dûneh dijâren lar-rečâjeb muḫîfe
4. *en ta'ṭeni 'an ṣâḥebak testeǧeddi*
   telḳa' ma' al-bedwân binten naẓîfe.

1. "O camping place! O camping place of my beloved with thick long lashes!
   Thou wert deserted, and afterwards, O camping place of my darling! thou wert covered with densely growing plants.
2. I ask thee concerning my friend, whither went she?
   I tarry with thee as a true guest and shake thy right hand, that thou mayst tell me the truth."
3. The camp replied: "Thy beloved departed in the direction towards which I face, and hastened,
   So that between her and us there extend territories which fill the riding camels with terror.
4. If thou acceptest my counsel concerning thy friend, then seek a new one;
   Among the Bedouins thou wilt certainly meet a maiden without blemish."

A negro serving with one of the chiefs fell in love with a negress who was serving with the same chief. After a short time, however, he changed his service and departed to a new territory with his new master. His love did not wane and after a year he set out to seek his friend. He reached the camping place where he had last seen the negress. This camping place, which a year previously had been deserted and trampled upon, he found covered with a thick growth of plants. It had been made fertile by the ashes and camel excrements, so that after abundant rain the plants throve there. The negro dismounted from his camel, made a fire in the camping place — which was very easy to do, because on all sides there were lying piles of perennials and dry camel dung —, and acted as if he were the guest of the camping place. He tried to learn in what direction his beloved had departed.

Verse 2. Wishing to learn the truth, he seized in spirit the right hand of the camping place, took it and entreated it to tell him the truth, *muḥazhaz 'aṣ-ṣaḥîḥ*. This is what The Bedouin does when he wishes to obtain reliable news.

539x 789

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233 stray beast to come back to its place. Often the lost she-camel joins another herd, goes with it to the camp, moans when she does not hear the familiar voice of the herdsman, and moves towards him as soon as his ditty catches her ear. In case the stray animal is not in the camp, the owner and his friends mount their horses and ride out the same evening to hunt for it. If it is not found, they return the next day before noon, saddle their female riding camels, and the search begins anew. During their absence a member of the owner's kin rides up and down the camp every evening shouting: "Who has seen such and such a she-camel?" If someone happens to have seen her, the usual answer is: "O thou who hast lost a she-camel, know that she is at So-and-So's." No one would ever keep such knowledge to himself. A stray or lost she-camel is called *ḍâheba*, the man who has lost her, *meḍheb*.

[789] Although sucking, young camels are constantly threatened with danger from many beasts of prey, mainly wolves, the herdsman cannot always watch them, especially in a rocky territory or sandy desert, full of drifts and pits. However, in order to preserve them he draws a circle around them with his staff or a sharp stone and says: "The circle of Solomon, son of David, is between us and thee [wild beast]! If thou breakest it, Allâh will break thee! *ḫoṭṭa slejmân eben dâûd bênana w-bênak w-en ḳaṭa'taha ḳaṭa'ak allâh*." This circle is also called *lejâm*.

VALUE AND USES OF CAMELS

231 511 438 Without camels the Bedouins could not live in the desert. The she-camels give them milk all the year round; this forms the principal, and in many families the only, food for months. With the money received from the sale of camels they buy clothes, arms, and grain for both themselves and their horses. The camels they usually sell to the *fellâḥîn* or to the merchants who import in caravans the various goods needed in the towns and settlements situated far from the sea or from railways; some camels are also sold for meat in Egypt and Irak. The *fellâḥîn* use the camels in plowing, hauling, and threshing, for raising water, and for bringing their various products to the market. Fat she-camels more than twenty years old are bought for their flesh by the 'Aḳejl.

ǧenûs al-ḥurmat al-ḥalba' w-ar-raǧul al-malûs, as both are the cause of various mishaps! A Bedouin who marries a person that is quarrelsome and censorious, *al-ḥurmat ed-da"âja w-en-na"âja*, is never prosperous but will always be unhappy, both he and his children. A scolding woman wishes ill to her opponent in the following sentences:

"*Sab' ḥal-waǧh*. May [a wild beast, demon] tear this face!"

"*Sa'an jasba' haš-šâreb*. May [the demon] utterly tear up this mustache!" *Šâreb*, mustache, means man in general.

"*Row bek. Tekwû* (or *tekû*) *bak*. Burn him! May they burn thee! [Mayest thou become so ill that] red-hot iron must be applied to thee!"

"*Ḥamdet ar-riḥ*. May the breeze of thy good fortune cease to blow towards thee!"

"*Ḥâjbt as-sa'ad*. May success be far from thee!"

"*Ḥejb as-sedd*. Mayest thou be disappointed in thy most secret wishes!"

"*Mout an-nâr*. Mayest thou go to hell after thy death!"

"*Allâh jil'an zên hal-ḥdûm alli mâ hi 'al-âdmi mâr 'ala 'âd aš-šîjara*. May Allâh curse this fine dress so that it will not garb a man but the stalk of a perennial!" This means that the person dressed in that suit is, for lack of success, to dry up as the stalk of a perennial dries up when there has been no rain for several years.

In making agreements the Rwejli must be very careful. If he agrees with his comrade that they will help each other faithfully in both good and bad days, *'ala-s-zên w-aš-šên*, he must not change the order of the words and say "*'ala-š-šên w-as-zên*," if he would not bring bad luck upon himself.

If a sorrel horse escapes from a raider and, dragging its rein, runs about in terror in front of the troop, the other riders try to drive it aside with their spears, shouting: "May Allâh forgive thee! *Semḥeč* (or *Sebḥeč*)." They know that it brings bad luck to them, yet they will not kill it as it deserves and therefore cry "*Semḥeč*," instead of "*Seb'eč*, May He destroy thee!" A sorrel with a white spot on both the right and left hind leg is called *mâuželbe* because it throws its rider frequently. A mare who scratches with her forehoofs continually will ruin her rider as surely as a wife who cannot keep order, *al-faras al-ḥarrâǧa w-al-marat aš-ša"âǧa* (or *šarrâǧa*). A camel with a curly spot on the root of her tail, *'aḳer-*

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791 the *munâbi* is to appear. They come to the seer on Thursday
756 night, accompany him on his visits to the sick and on raids, and join him whenever he commands them. One part of their duty is to carry little drums and other musical instruments,
●[789] *dfûf w-ħilâ* or *dirbâš*. If the sorcerer wants to call the spokesman-angel to him, he beckons to the disciples to play, while he himself squats with his head bent down. After a while he begins to move, stands up, stretches out his hands, jumps about, contorts his body, and puts his hands, feet, and even his head close to the fire, clapping his hands. The Bedouins say of this that he is just playing, *jel'ab*, but his disciples call it yielding to the influence of the *islâm*, ecstasy. When his enthusiasm reaches its climax, either Allâh's spokesman or some of the seer's ancestors appear on the scene. After the climax has subsided, the seer, greatly exhausted, complains that he can do nothing. The Bedouins, however, who cannot be made to believe that this ecstasy is a mere preparation for the angel's appearance, deride the sorcerer, imitate his gestures, and call him one possessed and a juggler. Especially those of the new sorcerers whose ancestors were not known as seers are the target of their ridicule when trying to establish themselves. In this the Rwala are assisted by the acknowledged seers themselves, even by the new seer's temporary master. The new sorcerer is called *markî*, a fool; *masdûf*, bereft of reason; *ħabel*, feeble-minded; *wâše'eh kejfarda*, full of unbelief; *maṣfûħ*, drunk; *ma'rûṣ*, one possessed, etc. Should he declare something as the will of Allâh, all will laugh at him, for he could not learn anything from his ancestors who were not seers themselves, and the speaking angel does not know him. Yet even if, after all, he achieves something extraordinary, they say he was helped by some spirit, *ǧânn*, and with such the sorcerers never associate.
[555] However, by perseverance, patience, and courage a sorcerer-to-be in a few years will gain recognition not only from the Bedouins but from the hereditary sorcerers as well. The advance of such a sorcerer's son in his father's calling is, as a matter of course, much easier and speedier.

791 In defense of their honor the seers sometimes resort to
754 curses. They are unable by their own strength to ruin the scoffers, but their ancestors and the spokesman-angel with whom they communicate will ask Allâh to punish those who dare to persecute them. These will die prematurely, their sons

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will be slain, their herds perish. The chief Ṣaḳr eben Meṣreb, a famous leader of countless raids, was greatly incensed against both the sorcerers and their disciples because of their incessant greed and was once heard to say: "Oh, may Allâh rid me of you all! If you have enough, you disturb everybody's rest by your music and your foolery; if you are hungry, there is no being rid of you, you beggars; *low šeba'tu awǧejtu w-low ǧi'tu arzejtu*." On hearing this the insulted sorcerers called a meeting and one of them, Mnâḥi eben Dabbâr, cursed Ṣaḳr in the name of all present. A few days later the chief was dead.

Of the sorcerer's curse the Bedouins stand in much fear. If anybody hears that a seer has cursed him, he makes haste to find the seer and, falling on his face before the powerful man, crosses his hands behind his back as if fettered and says: "I ask the protection of thine ancestor and am willing to bring a lawful sacrifice as a gift to him, *ana dâḫel 'ala ǧeddekom w-ana ḥâṭṭ ḏebiḥat ǧeddekom mowkebha mowkebe šarʿijje*." The sorcerer answers: "Agreed, it has arrived; *támma w-jámma*." The animal selected for the sacrifice is killed by the sorcerer at the edge of the tent, with its head turned south, while the sorcerer says: "O Allâh, this sacrifice is destined for my ancestor." Then he besmears with the blood of the sacrificed animal the center pole of the tent and the strip which strengthens its roof, *ṭarîket al-bejt*; the meat he and his disciples eat, and the accursed is relieved.

At the time when this was written (1909) the following persons were recognized as true seers: men: Mnâḥi eben Dabbâr, Rannâm eben Ǧel'ûd, Ṣajjâḥ eben Ǧlejdân, Za'al eben 'Awwâd; women: 'Ešba bint Hmezi, Baṭḥa bint 'Awwâd, and Dlejjîl bint Mâṭi.

A sorcerer can give information whether and for how long it is going to rain; whether a wife will bear a boy or a girl; whether the young produced by the mare or camel will be a male or a female; whether a raid will succeed, etc.

War expeditions on a large scale are always accompanied by a sorcerer who instructs the commander in anything he may undertake. The latter asks the sorcerer's advice only on occasions when he is at a loss what to do. Then the seer stimulates himself with music and works himself into an ecstasy, which helps him hear the angel speak and proclaim the will of Allâh.